

Message Text

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47

ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ADP-00 HEW-08 SCI-06 TRSE-00 OMB-01 L-03

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----- 111473

R 190530 Z APR 73

FM AMCONSUL KARACHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7139

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMCONSUL LAHORE

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E. O. 11652 N/ A

TAGS: EIND, PK

SUBJECT: PHARMACEUTICALS: EXCESS STOCKS PROBLEM SUBSTANTIALY
SOLVED

REF: A. KARACHI 0526; B. ISLAMABAD 2932

1. FROM CONVERSATIONS WITH SECRETARY AND PRESIDENT
PPMA FOLLOWING FIVE- DAY HOLIDAY WEEKEND IN PAKISTAN,
APPEARS MINHEALTH HAS SUFFICIENTLY BROADENED
ITS PREVIOUS POSITION ON " EQUIVALENCY" OF BRAND NAME
TO GENERIC DRUGS SO THAT OVERWHELMING MAJORITY DRUGS
NOW ON SHELVES OF PHARMACISTS AND IN PIPELINE FROM
MANUFACTURERS MAY BE SOLD TO PAKISTANI PUBLIC. THIS
ACTION FOLLOWED HIGH COURT HEARING ON WRIT PETITION,
FILED AGAINST MINHEALTH BY RETAIL PHARMACISTS, AND
CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN HEALTH MINISTRY AND PHARMACISTS
IN ISLAMABAD ON APRIL 9. ADDITIONAL LIST OF BRAND
NAME " EQUIVALENTS" TO GENERIC DRUGS WILL, ACCORDING
TO PPMA, BE RELEASED IN NEXT FEW DAYS, COVERING NEARLY
ALL DRUGS NOW ON MARKET.

2. DURING VISIT BY CONGENOFF TO PHARMACIES APRIL 17
IT APPEARED NEARLY ALL DRUGS ON SALE BEFORE APRIL 1
WERE AGAIN ON SALE EITHER OPENLY WITH BRAND NAMES
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UPSIDE DOWN ON SHELVES TO HIDE BRAND NAMES FROM PUBLIC VIEW. THUS, THROUGH STRETCHING "EQUIVALENCY" TO GREAT LENGTHS, MINISTRY HAS NOW ALLOWED RETAIL PHARMACISTS TO CONTINUE SALES PRACTICALLY AS BEFORE APRIL 1. PHARMACISTS ALSO SEEM ASSURED THAT EVEN LIBERALIZED EQUIVALENCY AND RELABELING REGULATIONS

WILL NOT BE STRICTLY ENFORCED BY MINHEALTH.

3. WHILE RETAIL PHARMACISTS' PROBLEMS AND THAT OF MANUFACTURERS WITH RESPECT TO STOCKS PRODUCED PRIOR TO CUT-OFF DATE FOR MANUFACTURE BRAND NAMES DRUGS THUS SUBSTANTIALLY SOLVED, PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURERS ARE STILL HAVING TROUBLE ADAPTING TO RESTRICTED 1,100 ITEM FORMULARY. SOME FIRMS, SUCH AS PFIZER AND JOHNSON & JOHNSON, NOW APPEAR TO BE DOING QUITE WELL UNDER GENERIC PRODUCTION. OTHER COMPANIES REPORT SLOW SALES OF RESTRICTED NUMBER GENERIC ITEMS THEY NOW PRODUCING. PPMA SECRETARY WHO, AS MIGHT BE EXPECTED, GIVES MOST PESSIMISTIC REPORTS CONCERNING STATE OF INDUSTRY, EMPHASIZES MAJOR PROBLEMS INDUSTRY WILL ENCOUNTER IN MAINTAINING PRODUCTION AND PRESENT STAFF UNLESS FORMULARY ENLARGED.

4. ATTORNEY GENERAL HAS GIVEN PRESIDENT PPMA NO CLEAR REPLY CONCERNING LATTER' S QUERY ON WHETHER DRUG LAW IS PROTECTED BY CONSTITUTION. ATTORNEY GENERAL HAS, HOWEVER, WARNED AGAINST FURTHER LEGAL CHALLENGES AGAINST DRUG LAW WHICH PPMA HAS BEEN PLANNING. PPMA WILL HOLD MEETING APRIL 19 TO MAP NEW STRATEGY, WHICH WILL INCLUDE FURTHER COUNTER- MEASURES AGAINST BURGEONING LOCAL "BACK ROOM" DRUG FIRMS WHICH NOW COMING ON MARKET WITH ALLEGEDLY SUBSTANDARD GENERIC ITEMS.
TIGER

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